Efforts to get permanent seat in Security Council

961. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA:
SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what efforts India is making to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council;

(b) whether South Africa has extended its support to India;

(c) if so, which are the other countries that are supporting and which are the countries that are opposing India becoming a permanent member of the Security Council; and

(d) what is the US stand on this matter and whether US has offered any conditional support to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (d) The issue of the reform and the restructuring of the UN Security Council and the question concerning new permanent members has been under discussion at the United Nations for several years. There are several complex issues involved and no decision has been reached in this regard. India believes that the reform and restructuring exercise is important and that by any objective criteria, India's claim for permanent membership is based on strong credentials. Seen in this broad framework, there is a growing momentum in support of India's candidature for permanent membership. The Government pursues India's candidature in all its high-level bilateral interactions and in relevant forums. Several countries — permanent members as well as others — have openly expressed support for India's candidature either in the UN or in the context of bilateral exchanges. Such support is exercised in different forums and forms and it is therefore difficult to give a definitive number on countries which have specifically supported India, or anticipate any specific time-frame for reform or expansion of the UN Security Council. South Africa has expressed its support for India. The US has not taken a clear position.

Talks with Iran and Pakistan with regard to Indo-Iran gas pipeline

962. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to initiate talks with Iran

and Pakistan to establish a gas pipeline to meet the energy crisis; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) India and Iran had constituted a Joint Committee in May, 2000 to study all aspects of supply of Iranian gas to India, including different modes of transportation, route options and related political, security, economic and technical issues. The Committee has been continuing with its mandated work. Work related to feasibility studies is in progress.

There is no structured mechanism of talks with Pakistan on the issue of gas pipeline. India has security concerns regarding any pipeline transiting through Pakistan. There is also the issue of overall context of trade, transit and economic relationship.

Expansion of Security Council

963. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the emergence of hegemonic domination and attempts to impose a unipolar world, there is a need to re-structure United Nations and expand the Security Council by including developing democratic countries and non-aligned countries; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to work with China and non-aligned countries together to restructure the United Nations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) The UN is nearly sixty years old and the structure of the Security Council reflects the realities at the time of the founding of the UN. The membership of the UN today is nearly four times since its inception in 1945. In keeping with the expansion in the membership of the UN, and in order to better reflect the contemporary realities, there is a need for the reform of the UN system including an expansion of the Security Council. In this framework, India has consistently and actively stressed the urgent need for the reform and the restructuring of the UN Security Council. The necessity to have a larger representation of the developing countries including some developing countries as permanent members in an expanded Security Council has also been emphasized by us.